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## Poland

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### **New Polish Draft GE Labeling Legislation**

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**Report Highlights:**

The Polish Ministry of Agriculture (MinAg) issued new draft labeling voluntary standards for food products free from genetic engineering (GE), including for animal products derived from livestock not fed with GE feeds and/or products. The draft standard would include a “non-GMO” label. MinAg plans to submit the draft legislation to the Upper Chamber of the Polish Parliament (Sejm) in fall 2018, after public comments are taken into consideration.

## **General Information:**

**Background:** Poland's MinAg issued new draft voluntary labeling standards for foods free of GE or derived ingredients, including animal products derived from livestock not fed with GE feeds or products. The draft standard would include a "non-GMO" label. According to MinAg, the draft Act is its response to Polish public requests, as well as calls from consumer organizations and food industry group to differentiate between products containing GE and non-GE products.

Eligible products under the draft Act would include processed and unprocessed foods of plant and animal origin. Products that are not produced with GE (e.g. wheat, most horticulture, etc.) as well as products without any European Union (EU) GE approvals (e.g. apples) would not be eligible to use the "non-GMO" label. Animal products derived from animal not fed with GE feeds, including meat, dairy, and eggs would be eligible to use the label.

The new draft standard was submitted for a public comment period from May 5-June 6, 2017. Consumer organizations strongly advocated for including animal-origin products not fed with GE feeds, despite that no GE proteins are detectable in most animal products. The draft standards were submitted for public consultations again in spring 2018. MinAg will take public comments into consideration and plans to submit the draft labeling standards to the Sejm, in early September 2018.

Poland implements EU GE labeling regulations for labeling food products. Packaged foods and packaged feeds are required to be labeled if GE-derived ingredients exceeds 0.9-percent of the products total composition. In Poland, "Contains GMOs" is labeled on such products and is enforced by local authorities. EU standards do not require animal products derived from livestock fed with GE feeds to be labeled. For more information on EU-28 labeling requirements please see [EU 28 Agricultural Biotechnology 2017](#).

Legislation regarding GE-labeling requirements have been implemented in other EU member states, including Germany, Austria, France, Slovenia, and Hungary. The voluntary use of the "GMO-free" label falls within Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011, Article 38, Paragraph 2. EU member states may adopt national rules which have not been harmonized under EU legislation, provided that they do not prohibit, hinder or restrict the free movement of goods complying with the abovementioned regulation. Some Polish dairy processors began labeling their products as "non-GMO" as early as last year in anticipation of this new labeling standard.

According to the MinAg, the GE labeling standard will increase consumer demand for non-GE food products and encourage Polish farmers to grow domestic plant proteins for feed. Currently Poland imports about 2.0 million metric tons of GE soybean meal, mostly from Argentina, Brazil, and the United States for Poland's large poultry and pork industries. MinAg aims to reduce soybean meal imports by 50 percent over the next five years and substitute domestically-produced plant proteins as an alternative for the imported soybean meal.